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**‘God’s Glorious Gospel: The Righteousness God Requires’**

**Message # 47 – ‘The Groan-Zone’**

**November 20th, 2016 Text: Rom. 8:26-27**

Keith M. Doyle, Lead Pastor – Winnetka Bible Church

**I. Summary:**

**1. Section #1: The Righteousness God Requires (Chap.1:1-3:20)**

* Romans 3:9-22 – **Summary:** Religious ‘Outsiders’ and ‘Insiders’ are all Under Sin (v.9); Under Law (v.19); Under Pressure (v.20); Under God (v.21,22)
* There is NO HUMAN SOLUTION…

**2. Section #2: The Righteousness Christ Provides (Chap.3:21-6:23)**

* So if there is NO human solution (Chap.3-5) – **God has a solution!**
* Chap. 6: The believer’s new relationship to remaining sin ***(‘know’, ‘reckon’, ‘present’)***

**3. Section #3: The Righteousness the Spirit Produces (Chap.7:1-8:39)**

* This **new union** has a ‘new way’ of living, ***‘…new way of the Spirit’***…(7:6)
* A radical change – The Holy Spirit, ***‘those who live…set their minds on the things of the Spirit’***

**4. Interrogative Question:**

* + ***Illus.*** *Moses’ prayer…(c/f Ex.32)*
  + *Who is in the ‘Groan-zone’?* Last week we saw: Christians, Creation…one more!
  + Have you ever ‘sighed’ more than you ‘spoke’? Ever been just ‘lost’ for words?
* **Q. *Where do you turn when you’re overwhelmed?***

1. **His Timing *’Likewise…the Spirit helps us in our weakness…’* (26)**
   1. **When we are weak**
   * **When does the Holy Spirit help?**

* ***‘Likewise…helps us…’* (26)** =In the same way…(what way? ***‘Helps’***) **-** *‘take hold at our side; to help by bearing our load’*
* ***‘…in our weakness…’*** **(26)** = *‘without strength – incapacitated, limitations from a sickness’*
  + Remember ‘the Helper’? The ‘Helper’ of the same kind (***‘allos parakletos’,*** Jn.14:16,17; Jn. 16:8) – His role as Comforting, Counseling, Convicting
  1. **When we are overwhelmed, *‘…we do not know what to pray for as we ought’* (26)**
  + What happens to us when we get overwhelmed?
* Clueless in prayer? It’s ok to admit that
* Doubt God, shut down, and accuse…the last thing we do or want to do? Pray – what good will it do?
* **Illus.** Distinction between ‘grumbling’ and ‘groaning’ **(c/f v.23, *‘…wait eagerly…’*** – longing for more of God, His Kingdom, His Justice
* C/f Ps.5:1; Ps.38:9; Ps.10:17; Ps.34:18

1. **His Tenderness *‘…Spirit Himself intercedes…with groaning’s too deep for words…’* (26, 27)** 
   1. **How does the Holy Spirit help?** In three staggering ways
   * **He helps us pray**

* Contrast: we ‘don’t know’ vs. He knows the heart (comfort and conviction)
* This is not a platitude (it is real help!) **Illus.** *‘Let me know if I can help’*
* How? Intercession two times = ***‘intercedes’*** – ‘*rescuing someone who has no resources’*
* Praying and pleading (‘***for the saints’***, 27) – but it gets even better
* Two prayer partners – Jesus Intercedes too (c/f Heb.Heb.7:25; 1 Jn.2:1)
  + **He helps us lament, *‘…groaning’s too deep for words…’***
* What are these ‘groans’? **Illus.** trapped in temporal maladies
* The groaning in prayer is where our weakness meets His strength
* **Two thoughts:**
* We want to magnify Jesus…but we often don’t…our actions and words hurt the Kingdom and hurt others
* Baffled by life…baffled by others…baffled by injustice…
* **Answer:** It could be a prayer language, often it’s the pressures of life and a longing for more of God
  + **He assures us (this is an ‘assurance passage’) –** ***‘…helps us…’*** (26,27)
* **Summary:** He helps…by searching our hearts, praying for us and leading us to God (27), ***‘And He who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit’***
* This ‘groaning’ will be in accordance with God’s will (27)
* **Apply:** Our failures with sin (chapter 7)…can consume us
* Our fear of future suffering (chapter 8)…can capsize us
  1. **Implications (J. Piper):** Be encouraged:
* That you are not expected to know the will of God in every respect
* That in your perplexity and groaning, you are not being judged, you are being understood
* That God’s work for you is not limited to what you can understand and express with words
* That in your weakness and sickness and loss and hardship and danger the Spirit of God is praying *for* you and not against you
* That your gracious, good and faithful Father hears the prayers of the Holy Spirit for you

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